

IN HONOR OF THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF LEGAL SERVICES OF NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

### HON. DORIS O. MATSUI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 15, 2006

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor an organization with a distinguished history of community service to the Sacramento capital region. Legal Services of Northern California is celebrating 50 years of providing free legal services to the low-income residents of Sacramento County and 22 other counties in Northern California. As the staff and supporters of Legal Services of Northern California gather to celebrate this momentous milestone, I ask all my colleagues to join me in saluting one of Sacramento's most important and respected organizations.

In 1956, Legal Services of Northern California, then known as the Legal Aid Society of Sacramento County, was born out of the insight of prominent members of the Sacramento Bar Association and a budget of \$12,000. With the assistance of volunteer pro bono attorneys and a staff consisting of one part-time attorney and one social worker, the Legal Aid Society of Sacramento County finished its first year having provided assistance to nearly 2,900 low-income clients.

From these humble beginnings 50 years ago, the Legal Aid Society has grown significantly. In 1967, the organization began to expand its services beyond Sacramento County and opened offices in Yolo County. By the late 1970s, the Legal Aid Society of Sacramento County had acquired a state-wide reputation for resolute and effective advocacy on behalf of the poor and disabled, and had won significant victories on behalf of its clients. To reflect its expanding geographic reach, the organization changed its name in 1979 to Legal Services of Northern California, which today operates offices serving 23 counties, with a budget of over \$7 million and a staff of over 120 employees and 1,000 volunteers.

Legal Services of Northern California has also greatly expanded its scope of services beyond providing traditional legal assistance to low-income individuals. The organization now operates the Senior Legal Hotline, the Health Rights Hotline, Ombudsman Services of Northern California, and the Disability Employment Rights Advocacy Program. As a testament to its far-reaching services, the Senior Legal Hotline fields almost 9,000 calls each year from seniors all over California. Also notable was in early 2006 when Legal Services of Northern California acquired the Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Program, an organization that advises thousands of seniors on the different prescription drug plans available to them under Medicare.

Mr. Speaker, for 50 years the good men and women of Legal Services of Northern California have dedicated countless hours to identifying and defeating the causes of poverty and injustice. As the staff and volunteer attorneys gather to reflect upon a half century of exemplary service to the community, I am proud to recognize such a reputable organization. I ask all of my colleagues to join me in congratulating Legal Services of Northern California and wishing them many more years of continued success.

TRIBUTE TO MR. ELMO LOPEZ, SR.

### HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 15, 2006

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Elmo Lopez, Sr., as a recipient of the 2006 Longhorn Legacy Awards, given to him on October 5, 2006 by the Laredo Chapter of the University of Texas Ex-Students Association.

Elmo Lopez, Sr. is a native of the city of Rio Grande and now currently resides in the city of Laredo in the State of Texas. He graduated from the University of Texas at Austin with degrees in music, a Bachelor of Arts in 1953 and a Masters in 1957, and thus began a long, accomplished musical career. Shortly after graduation, he worked as Band Director for the Laredo Independent School District, bringing his experience as a band member of the UT Longhorns Band to Lamar Junior High, Martin High School, and Nixon High School from 1953 to 1967. During this time, he served in several posts with the Texas Music Educators Association.

Mr. Lopez's passion for music was recognized by the Texas Legislature for promoting good will between the United States and Mexico through musical exchange programs. He also was honored in 1963 with Laredo Paso Doble, a musical composition written by Professor Clifton Williams at the University of Texas at Austin. In addition to having guest conducted the UT Longhorn Band on numerous occasions, he also conducted the United States Armed Forces band and the Special Presidential Band of Mexico.

In 1987, Mr. Lopez founded the Laredo Chapter of the UT-Exes as a way to keep the connection between the University of Texas at Austin and its alumni in the city of Laredo. He dedicated his time and energy to the University including 12 years of service on the Board of Directors of the UT Dad's Association, and was named Distinguished Alumnus in 1993 and honored with the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Laredo UT-Exes.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to have had this time to recognize the dedication of Mr. Elmo Lopez, Sr. to his music and to the community of the city of Laredo.

### A TRIBUTE TO ESMERALDA BROWN

### HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 15, 2006

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Esmeralda Brown, a distinguished citizen of Brooklyn, New York, and contributor to the world community. It behooves us to pay tribute to this outstanding woman, and I hope my colleagues will join me in recognizing her impressive service.

As the Resource Center Specialist for Economic and Environmental Justice at the United Methodist Office for the United Nations, Esmeralda Brown deals with issues of concern to the Women's Division constituency in the area of economics, the environment, and development. Ms. Brown has been involved in

organizing several workshops and meetings in Latin America, the Caribbean, and North America. Issues discussed include racism, militarization, and the situation of women in the Americas.

Ms. Brown is the chairperson of the United Nation's NGO committee on the International Decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples. Ms. Brown is also the Southern Co-Chair of the NGO Steering committee to the NGO Commission on Sustainable Development. Ms. Brown holds the chairperson position for the Southern Caucus of NGO's that form part of the Regional and National Networks on Sustainable Development in developing countries of the world. She is also the Economic and Environmental Justice Specialist at the United Methodist Office for the United Nations. Additionally, Ms. Brown is a United Nations representative for the Commission of Human Rights in Central America and the Pan African Movement for the Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED).

In 1992, Ms. Brown was co-founder of the Peoples' Alliance for the Earth Summit. This organization did the preparatory work for the Non-Governmental Organizations invited to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED). Ms. Brown's work has not gone unnoticed. In June 1990, she was honored by the Ecumenical Program for Inter-American Communication and Action (EPICA) in Washington for Outstanding Contributions to the Struggle for Human Rights in Central America.

Esmeralda Brown is a native of Panama, and holds a B.A. in Political Science from Hunter College of the City University of New York.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that it is incumbent on this body to recognize the work of Esmeralda Brown. Her deep commitment to the international community makes her most worthy of our recognition today.

### HONORING THE JOHN G. SHEDD AQUARIUM

### HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 15, 2006

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the John G. Shedd Aquarium, the 2006 recipient of the National Award for Museum and Library Services. It comes as no surprise to me that this superior institution was selected as the recipient of this award. The Shedd Aquarium has served not only Chicago, but the entire Nation, for well over 75 years. It very much deserves our admiration and respect.

The John G. Shedd Aquarium is a world class institution that enjoys a national reputation for excellence. The Shedd Aquarium is truly the world's aquarium. In addition to being the largest indoor aquarium in the world, the Shedd was one of the first aquariums to offer an education program. Through its unique ability to make education fun, the Shedd has touched the lives of the more than 2 million of people who walk through its doors every year.

The John G. Shedd Aquarium is so much more than a museum; the scientists and staff are leaders throughout the world in research and conservation. The research initiatives that